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Uruguay

Post Report

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Preface

Uruguay, the second smallest country in South America, is surrounded by the giants of the continent—Brazil and Argentina. A proud country with a democratic heritage and a comparatively high standard of living, Uruguay was a pioneer in the development of social welfare programs and public education.

Montevideo, the capital city, has a strong European influence. Despite its large population (1.31 million), Montevideo resembles a much smaller city with its leisurely pace and outlook.

Cover: Plaza Independencia and the Statue dedicated to Jose Artigas, first leader of the Independence Movement, which lead to Uruguayan independence from Spain in 1825.

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The Host Country

Area, Geography, and Climate

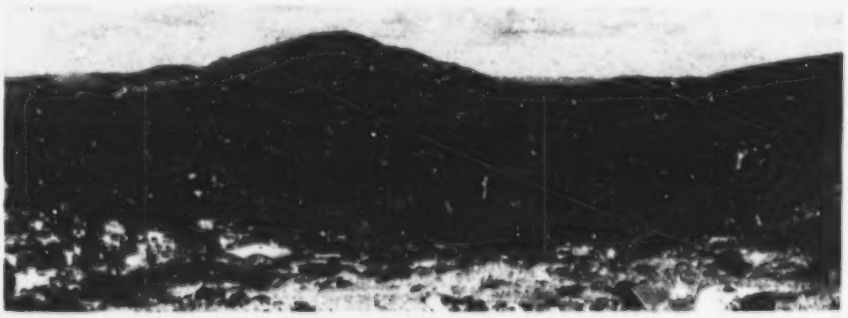
La Republica Oriental del Uruguay (the Eastern Republic of Uruguay) covers an area of 72,200 square miles, slightly larger than North Dakota.

Topographically, the country is divided into three parts: the southern area, a belt of gently undulating alluvial plains; the western part, an extension of Argentina's flat pampas; and the northern area, an extension of southern Brazil's low regions and broad valleys. Maximum elevation from sea level is about 2,000 feet; the average altitude is about 490 feet. Little natural forestation exists, but extensive reforestation has been undertaken.

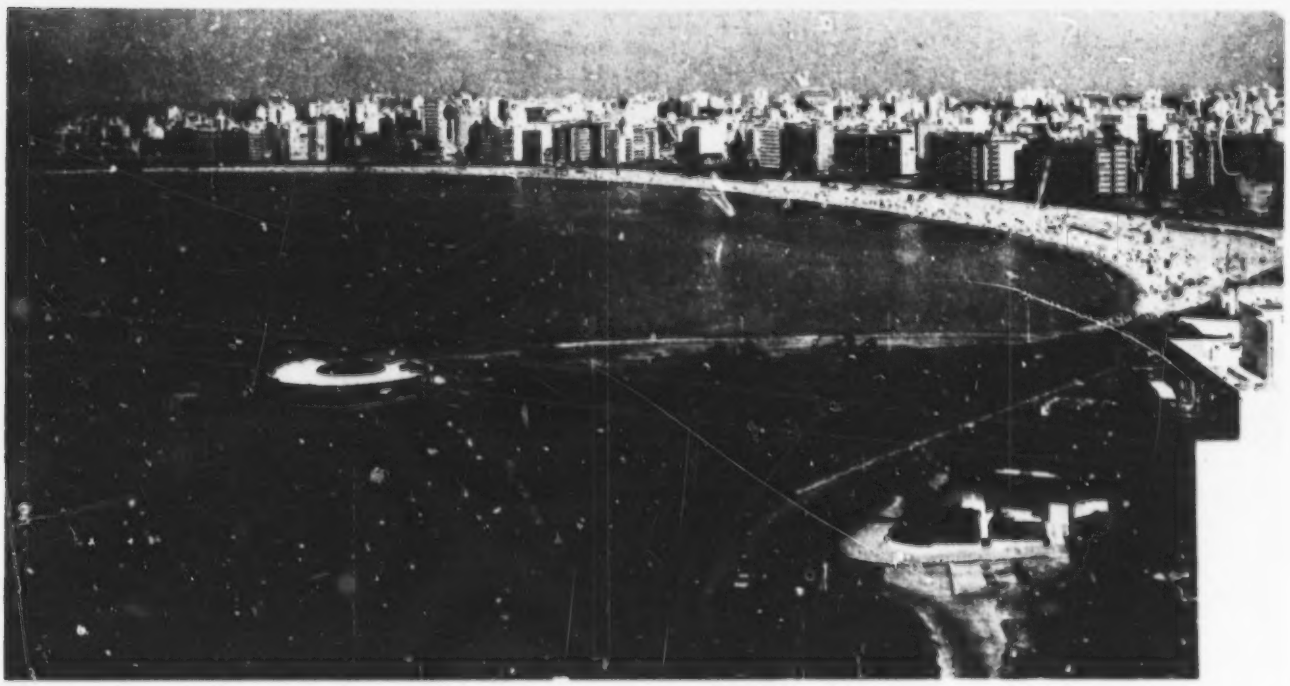
Except for a small subtropical area on the northwest border with Brazil, the climate is even throughout Uruguay. Temperatures are generally mild but seasons are distinct: Summer daytime temperatures average 70°F and rarely exceed the mid-90's; autumn (March–May) is mild and spring (September–November) is usually damp, cold, and windy. In winter, monthly temperatures range from 44°F to 60°F with occasional frost. Average annual rainfall is 39.5 inches. High humidity, averaging 75% year round, along with frequent Antarctic winds, cause a chill similar to a snowy climate. High winds are frequent in winter; spring and fall wind shifts are pronounced. Abrupt weather changes from day to day, and even during the day, are substantial. Seasonal high winds and occasional droughts and floods make the weather even more unpredictable.

Population

Uruguay's population (2.92 million) is composed primarily of persons with Spanish and Italian ancestry. The small number of native Indians disappeared in the last century. Some 2% of the population is black, mostly Brazilian immigrants. Small colonies of German, East European, Armenian, and British residents also live here. Most "Anglos" are second and third generation dual-nationals whose ancestors came in the last century to work in the



Some 45% of Uruguay's population live in Montevideo, a modern city near the ocean, while some live in interior small towns.



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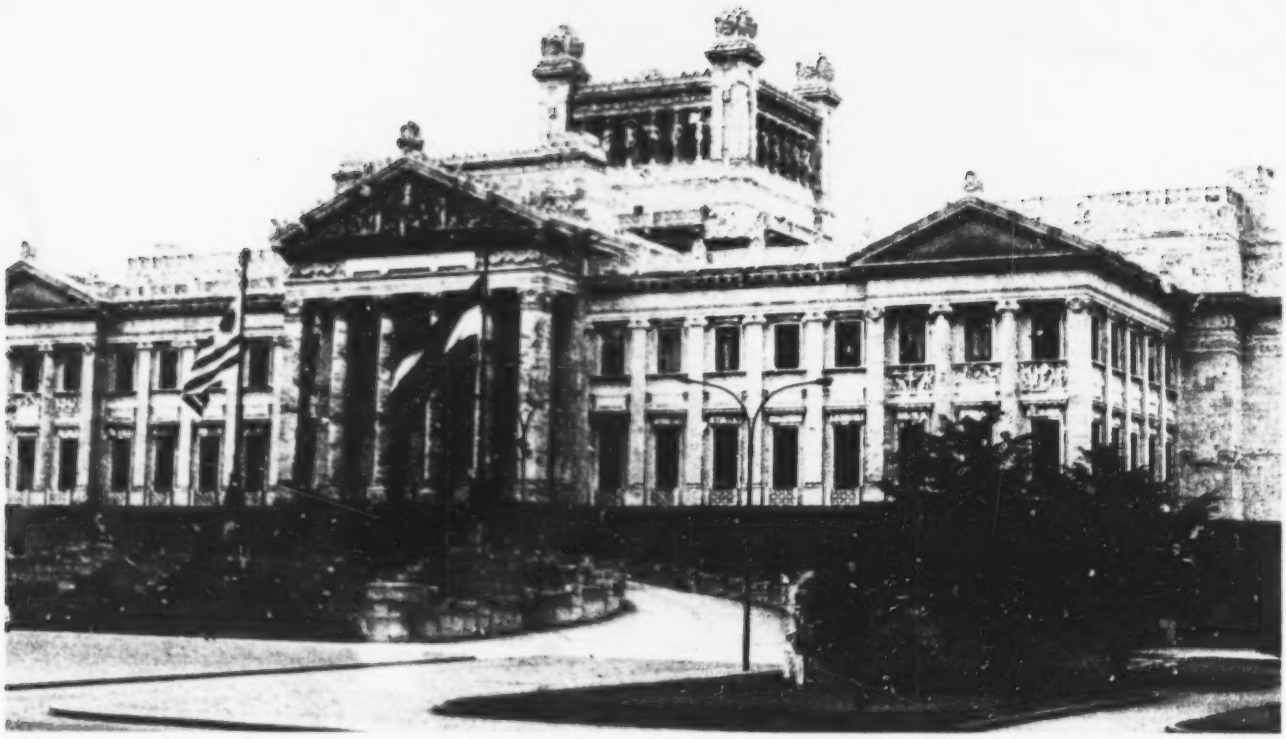

Uruguay's Legislative Palace in Montevideo.

many British-founded companies. Many speak English as their primary language. A small colony of Swiss live in an area called Colonia Suiza located about 100 miles west of Montevideo. Many Swiss still speak the language and retain the customs of their European relatives.

About 45% of Uruguay's total population live in Montevideo. Salto and Paysandu, with 70,000 inhabitants each, vie for the honor as the second largest city. Several other cities are in the 25,000–40,000 population range. Uruguay does not share Latin America's concern with the "population explosion"; its annual growth rate has remained at 1.2% for a number of years. Families are small and close.

Life expectancy is 70 years and the literacy rate is about 94%, the highest in Latin America. Spanish is the spoken language in Uruguay. Religion does not play a dominant role in the lives of Uruguayans. Roman Catholicism is the predominant faith but many persons are Protestants. Montevideo has one of Latin America's larger Jewish communities.

Public Institutions

Uruguay has traditionally been one of the strongest democracies in Latin America. The Tupamaro terrorism of the late 1960s and early 1970s, however, led to increasing military involvement in the government, culminating with closure of the legislature in 1973 and ouster of the President in 1976. Uruguay's constitution, partly suspended and amended by a series of institutional acts since the mid-1970s, provides for a republic with three separate branches of government. The President currently cogoverns with the three military service chiefs. The Cabinet and autonomous state agencies are run by a mixture of military and civilians. A new legislature, the 35-member Council of State, was named in 1981 to pass laws and approve the budget. A judiciary, recently made independent again, completes the current institutional arrangement. A military court system has jurisdiction in cases of subversion and security, while an electoral court directs and oversees elections.

Uruguay's 19 departments are organized similarly to the national government. With few exceptions, military officers are appointed as departmental governors. Departmental legislative functions are in the hands of government-appointed "Juntas de Vecinos."

The two major political parties, National (Blanco) and Colorado, are among Uruguay's most enduring institutions dating from the earliest years of national history. They have traditionally embraced 85%–90% of the electorate. Third parties have existed for varying periods but have not been successful in winning power. A number of small, leftist parties formed a coalition called the Broad Front to compete in the 1971 elections. Most of them, like the Communist and Socialist Parties, were outlawed in 1973 and their leaders were politically proscribed in the mid-1970s.

In 1977, the military announced a schedule to return Uruguay to a democratic government. A draft constitution, containing a strong institutional voice for the military, was

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defeated in a 1980 plebiscite. In 1981, the military drew up new plans to restore democratic rule, drafted a new party law, and lifted proscriptions on many party leaders. Party elections are scheduled for late 1982. Successive steps call for a new electoral law, a new or revised constitution, and in 1984, national elections with a civilian government taking control in March 1985.

Arts, Science, and Education

Montevideo is the cultural center of the Republic. Activities in the cultural field are varied and continuous, but most occur during the school year, March–November. The cultural environment mainstay is the S.O.D.R.E. (Servicio Oficial de Difusion Radio Electrica), the official government radio and television network.

Since the S.O.D.R.E. theater was destroyed by fire in 1971, most programs are held in the municipal (SOLIS) theater, just off the Plaza Independencia. S.O.D.R.E. has many activities. During its annual 15- to 18-week season, it features internationally famous conductors and performers. Short opera and ballet seasons usually follow the symphony season. Tickets for both season and individual performances are roughly comparable to ticket prices in the US, but expect to wait in line overnight when the season series go on sale once a year due to their popularity.

Uruguay has several artists with international reputations. Musical groups frequently perform in the National Library and in several theaters and binational institutions throughout the city. Such performances include piano, instrumental, voice, and quartet recitals and chorals. Argentine, American, English, French, German, and other international performers also appear under the auspices of their embassies or local "empresarios."

Many public galleries display the latest works of famous and fledgling artists. Good works of art can be found within a broad range of prices.

Uruguayans have a lively interest in legitimate theater. Productions by the Comedia Nacional ranging from the merely ambitious to the highly polished may be seen at the SOLIS or VERDI Theaters. Other theaters presenting professional productions are the Teatro Circular and the Teatro del Notariado. The Montevideo Players, an amateur acting society with English and American participants, put on two or three plays a year in English. A multipurpose theater in Montevideo is at the US-Uruguayan Center (Alianza Uruguay-Estados Unidos), which shares the building with the USIS library. This hall has seen many popular and diverse theater attractions in addition to concerts, presentations by modern dance groups, and art exhibits. The USIS library is considered the best in Montevideo.

Education in Uruguay is free through the university level, and many people receive advanced degrees here. Numerous disciplines are represented.

Commerce and Industry

Uruguay has basically an agricultural economy. The country lacks mineral wealth and its land, except for a fertile strip which follows the Uruguay River throughout the length of the country, is primarily suited for grazing. In colonial times Uruguay mainly exported cattle hides; but for over a century the principal export products have been beef and wool. Current development policies encourage the growth of new industries which process agricultural raw materials for export. Although the country has no known hydrocarbon deposits, it is generally endowed with hydroelectric resources, now mostly developed. Electrical production from the world's fourth largest hydroelectric complex at Salto Grande (a joint venture with Argentina) began in late 1979 but will not substantially benefit Uruguay until the mid-1980s.

During the 1950s, Uruguay's economic structure was altered by the adoption of an import substitution/industrialization policy. In the following 20 years, Uruguayan industries were protected by high import charges as small industries grew to supply more of the economy's needs and as Uruguay attempted to develop manufactured exports. However, agriculture suffered and capital investment in that sector declined, while the cost of manufactured articles rose. The result was general stagnation, inflation, and scant economic growth which contributed to political instability during the 1960s and early 1970s.

In 1973, the governing authorities began to explore possibilities for a different approach to economic development. A program of gradual economic liberalization was adopted and is still in the process of implementation. Basically the government's program involves a lessening of controls over the economy and a diminished public sector, combined with greater Uruguayan participation in international trade. The latter has been stimulated by new tax policies, by the lifting of exchange and capital controls, and by removing or reducing barriers to importation. One result has been a major surge in exports of processed items, including leather goods, foods, textiles, fish, marble and granite, fruits, and vegetables. Uruguay's major trading partners, in rank order, are Brazil, Argentina, and the US.

While new export industries have contributed to the growth of employment and foreign exchange earnings, they have also been necessary to pay the higher price (now some one-third of export earnings) of imported petroleum products—a serious drain on the country's resources. However, Uruguay has achieved a respectable growth rate in the past several years. On the basis of a more careful management of government finances, Uruguay's credit worthiness has been restored. Currently, it is trying to develop new markets. As Uruguayan tourist facilities have grown, tourism (mostly from Argentina) also has become an increasing source of revenue. The harvest from a rich fisheries resource off the Uruguayan coast, still increasing very rapidly, has become an important industry. Problems yet to be solved include additional restructuring of the economy, more efficient use of public sector resources, and the development of adequate outlets for Uruguay's products abroad.

Transportation

Automobiles

The vehicle import policy of this post places no fixed limits on the price, color, or type of vehicle imported to Montevideo. However, to effect free entry, the Embassy needs to know the make, model, year, and anticipated date of shipment at least 30 days before releasing the vehicle for shipment. If there are any conditions (e.g., repair facilities) that would make a vehicle unsuitable for use in Montevideo, the

One of Montevideo's many lovely plazas.

post will advise the employee promptly.

To import a personal vehicle the Despatch Agent must send the Embassy the following documentation:

- two originals and two copies of the bill of lading. A description of the vehicle and accessories should be included in the bill of lading,
- two copies of the commercial invoice, and
- one original copy of the consular invoice.

Personnel shipping a personal vehicle, a two-wheeled motorized vehicle, or an outboard motor should send the Embassy a copy of the bill of sale or invoice as soon as possible.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs requests that American personnel arriving at post with a vehicle, new or used, bring a copy of the bill of sale or invoice. The amount shown on this document will determine the tax value of the car imposed on the purchaser of the vehicle if it is sold on your departure. If the original bill of sale or invoice is unavailable or if the document does not reflect the current value of the vehicle, an invoice from an authorized car dealer stating the car's value can be substituted.

Under Uruguayan Government regulations, persons with duty-free privileges may import two motorcycles, motorscooters, or motorbikes. These cannot be larger than 50 cubic centimeters in displacement. Two-wheeled vehicles must be boxed and shipped separately.

Vehicles which may be transported at US Government expense include passenger automobiles, station wagons, or similar vehicles which would be used primarily for personal transportation.

Before you bring a car to post, note that gasoline is expensive (currently around $2.70 per gallon with discount coupons) and that residential garages tend to be small. Many persons prefer a subcompact or compact car for better mileage performance. Resale demand for these cars is normally better. If the car has a catalytic converter, it should be removed since leaded gasoline (the only gasoline available) will damage it. In addition to smaller American cars (e.g., Pinto and Chevette), Peugeots, VW's, Datsuns, Toyotas, and Fiats are popular here, as are Renaults and Citroens, but to a lesser degree. Service and repair facilities are good and readily available for more popular models.

Anything that can be easily removed from your car such as the radio, hubcaps, cigarette lighter, rearview mirror, windshield wipers, and ashtray should be packed and shipped with household effects. Shipboard theft and pilferage do occur. Marine insurance should be obtained for all shipments.

Uruguayan law requires that cars be covered by third-party liability insurance, purchased from the national insurance company of Uruguay (Banco de Seguros). Because of the high valuation placed on late model imported cars, this insurance is relatively expensive, but the premium can be paid on a quarterly basis and is usually billed many months late.

American personnel have found it advantageous to carry an American collision policy, since the national insurance company is very slow in paying claims. Information is available at post concerning American companies which pay claims expeditiously. All policies can be amended for tourist travel to nearby countries.

All employees and family members are granted a Uruguayan drivers license on presentation of a valid drivers license issued by another country. However, expect a delay of about 2 weeks in obtaining these licenses. All employees and family members who plan to drive in Uruguay are urged to obtain an international driving permit from any American Automobile Association (AAA) office in the US before coming to post. On arrival, international licenses will be endorsed by the Uruguayan Automobile Club for local driving.

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Local

Within Montevideo bus service is cheap and extensive. Taxi fares are reasonable, but taxis are hard to find during rush hours and rainy weather.

Intercity bus service, the most popular transportation method, is frequent to most parts of the interior. Modern buses, including sleepers, connect Montevideo with Brazil and Argentina. Railway service within Uruguay is slow and infrequent. Bus and rail tickets are cheaper than in the US.

Uruguay has more vehicles 25 years old or older per mile of roadway than any country in the world. Though delightful for old car lovers, the combination of older models (cachilas) chugging alongside newer models can make driving in Montevideo nerve-racking. Accidents, mostly minor, occur frequently due to unclearly marked thoroughfares and traffic signals, and many untrained drivers. A rule of thumb is to be prepared to yield the right-of-way. Maintenance and body work are normally good, but parts and labor are expensive. If you can wait, parts can be ordered from the US through APO.

Roads in and around the capital are generally fair, but many streets are poorly identified and illuminated. Some hard surface roads in the interior are excellent, but in many areas the all weather aspect of these roads is questionable. The more traveled routes, such as the highway between Punta del Este and Montevideo, have service stations, tow trucks, and other facilities. A good jack and spare tire are essential for travel to the interior.

Gasoline is sold by a government company, ANCAP, as well as by ESSO, Texaco, Shell, and other international oil companies. The better grade of gas is of lower octane than that used in the US, but American cars operate adequately with it. Gasoline discount coupons are sold through the General Services Office to eligible employees. Using a moderate detergent oil is recommended.

Regional

Several international airlines, including Pan Am, fly from Uruguay to other parts of Latin America, North America, and Europe. Pan Am has flights from Montevideo only twice weekly. Many other international flights board in Buenos Aires, only 25 minutes by air from Montevideo, but expect a wait of several hours to make most international air connections. Pluna, the government-operated airline, offers flights to the interior of Uruguay and to Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay. Two US shipping lines, Moore-McCormack and Delta, provide freight and some passenger service between Montevideo, the US, and other Latin American ports. An overnight ferry or hydrofoil service is available for travel to Buenos Aires.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Uruguay's telephone network, especially in Montevideo, is antiquated and overburdened, and frequently it is impossible to place calls.

Telephone connections outside Uruguay, especially to the US, are good but expensive. English-speaking, long-distance operators are always on duty.

Telegraph facilities connecting Montevideo with North America and Europe are good but expensive. Although the Embassy does not have commercial facilities, ITT maintains an office at the Victoria Plaza Hotel in downtown Montevideo which provides pickup service to the Embassy.

A regular telegram costs 70¢ per word including address, plus an 18% tax on the total amount. A 22-word night letter costs about $8.10 including tax.

Mail and Pouch

US Government personnel may use APO facilities. Incoming and outgoing service is available twice weekly. Transit time between the US and Montevideo is about 1 week for letters and about 3 weeks for packages. APO mail from the US should be addressed:

Name
Agency (e.g., Embassy, USIS, DAO, GDC), Uruguay
APO Miami 34035

The APO will accept boxes which measure not more than 100 inches length and girth combined and do not weigh over 70 pounds. All packages containing items of value (watches, electronic equipment, and radios) should be insured prior to mailing. (Note: As of June 1982, the Embassy was experiencing difficulties in receiving packages through the APO. Resolution is expected by the end of September 1982.)

Radio and TV

Montevideo has 26 radio stations including 4 FM, and 4 TV channels. TV from Montevideo is transmitted to all parts of the country. The interior also has many radio stations and 16 other TV channels.

Radio programing consists of music, news programs, and soap operas. The tango, the music of the Rio de la Plata area, is heard on many stations; but modern rock from the US, Brazil, and Europe is equally popular.

S.O.D.R.E., the government-owned radio station, airs mainly classical music. Many stations have shows featuring semiclassical music and jazz. TV programing is more or less patterned after the American version; it differs in that many soap operas are shown during the prime evening hours. Some TV shows are produced in Buenos Aires and taped for broadcast; others are produced in Montevideo, Punta del Este, and sometimes in the interior. American TV shows, dubbed in Spanish, are also a staple of local TV; Uruguayans prefer American action and adventure programs. Very little public affairs programing exists, and TV newscasts are still in the rudimentary stages of development.

The "Late Show" is popular here, and devotees of old movies can see all their favorite stars of Hollywood's "Golden Era." Most films are dubbed in Spanish.

Uruguay has color and black-and-white TV transmission. American TV sets can be used here, but will only receive black-and-white images unless they are converted to the PAL–N color system. Conversion kits can be bought from several firms in the US or sets can be converted locally for about US$200.

The average cost of a small color TV set in Uruguay ranges from $1,300–$1,500. Black-and-white TV sets can be bought for about $350.

For more information concerning color TV sets suited for Uruguay, employees may contact: PAL–N TV Inc., 9808 NW 80th Avenue, Hialeah Gardens, Florida 33016, or contact General Electronics Inc., 4513 Wisconsin Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20016.

Uruguay now has a ground receiving station. Satellite TV programing of major international news events and some international sports events can be enjoyed.

Shortwave reception is excellent in

The British Hospital—one of the local hospitals.

Montevideo outside the downtown area. Listeners can usually pick up the VOA, BBC, and the Armed Forces Radio Service. The best reception is from 8 pm to midnight.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

Six Spanish-language newspapers are published daily in Montevideo. *The Buenos Aires Herald*, an English-language daily, is available. It has a fair coverage of international news, a good stock market section, sports section, and a selection of American comics but is expensive.

The only American magazines available inexpensively and regularly are *Time* and *Newsweek*. Other US magazines, such as *Ladies' Home Journal*, are available occasionally at exorbitant prices. To insure receipt of your magazine subscriptions, have them sent to your APO address.

Some technical journals from the US and Europe are sold in two or three bookshops specializing in foreign literature and periodicals. English paperbacks are sold at high prices in many bookshops; but, the most current bestsellers are not always available. Uruguay publishes several magazines, but none are of quality either in content or format. Several weekly tabloids publish minor news; many show promise as conveyors of intellectual ideas.

As Montevideo's most modern library, the USIS Artigas-Washington Library, is colorful, attractive, and offers advanced facilities. In addition to a selection of about 12,000 books in both English and Spanish, it provides members with an extensive audiovisual section. This section includes audio cassettes, tapes, records, video tapes and films, plus a broad selection of US magazines and journals which can be borrowed. American Embassy employees are invited to use the facilities.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

Montevideo has several adequate private hospitals. Well-trained medical doctors and dentists are available, some were trained in the US or Europe and speak English.

The Department of State established a Regional Medical Office in Montevideo in February 1979. The regional medical officer also has responsibility for Paraguay, Brazil, and Argentina. During the medical officer's absence from Montevideo, the Embassy relies on the post medical adviser, a local doctor who has served the Embassy for many years. A US registered nurse is on duty during regular working hours.

Community Health

In general, health conditions are good and no real health hazards exist. Food handling and sanitation standards are comparatively high; the water supply is safe in major cities. Fluoride is not present or added to the water in

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Montevideo. Sewage systems are good, but avoid bathing at close-in beaches as excessive waste from the downtown area is discharged into the river. The city government is undertaking a project to eliminate the problem.

Hepatitis definitely occurs in Uruguay and routine immunizations of gamma globulin are advised. Respiratory diseases (e.g., severe colds and bronchitis) and associated ear infections are common, especially from May to August. The Montevideo climate appears to aggravate allergic conditions related to respiratory problems. Gastrointestinal problems occur occasionally. No case of rabies has been reported in Uruguay for several years.

Preventive Measures

Persons who take any kind of medication regularly should bring an adequate supply to post. Local supplies of medicine are usually below US standards or dosages. If you desire vitamins with fluoride for your children, bring them. Regular vitamins and aspirin can be purchased locally. Medicines can be ordered easily from the US, especially if you make arrangements with your local pharmacy and/or have been given prescriptions by your physician. Local pharmacies are open weekends on a rotating basis.

Employment for Spouses and Dependents

Embassy employment opportunities include temporary secretarial or nursing services. Positions available generally require typing and/or shorthand. Prospective teachers may write directly to the Director, Uruguayan-American School, c/o American Embassy, Uruguay, APO Miami 34035, or to the Director, British School, Maximo Tajes 6400, Montevideo, Uruguay.

Uruguayan law neither prohibits spouse employment nor requires special work permits. However, opportunities are few even for those fluent in Spanish. Salaries are also very low by US standards, the result of a highly qualified labor force, a small labor market, and a relatively high rate of unemployment (13%). US and third-country firms, as well as local companies, offer few employment opportunities as they usually find no difficulty in obtaining qualified bilingual Uruguayan candidates. International organizations maintain small staffs.

On arrival, each spouse is requested to complete a form included in the Welcome Kit to identify the spouse's profession and experience. Also, indicate on the form if you wish to be considered for employment as opportunities arise. Although the post is relatively small, it occasionally offers some job opportunities for couples who are both US Government employees.

Pocitos Beach in Montevideo offers 5 months of water sports a year.

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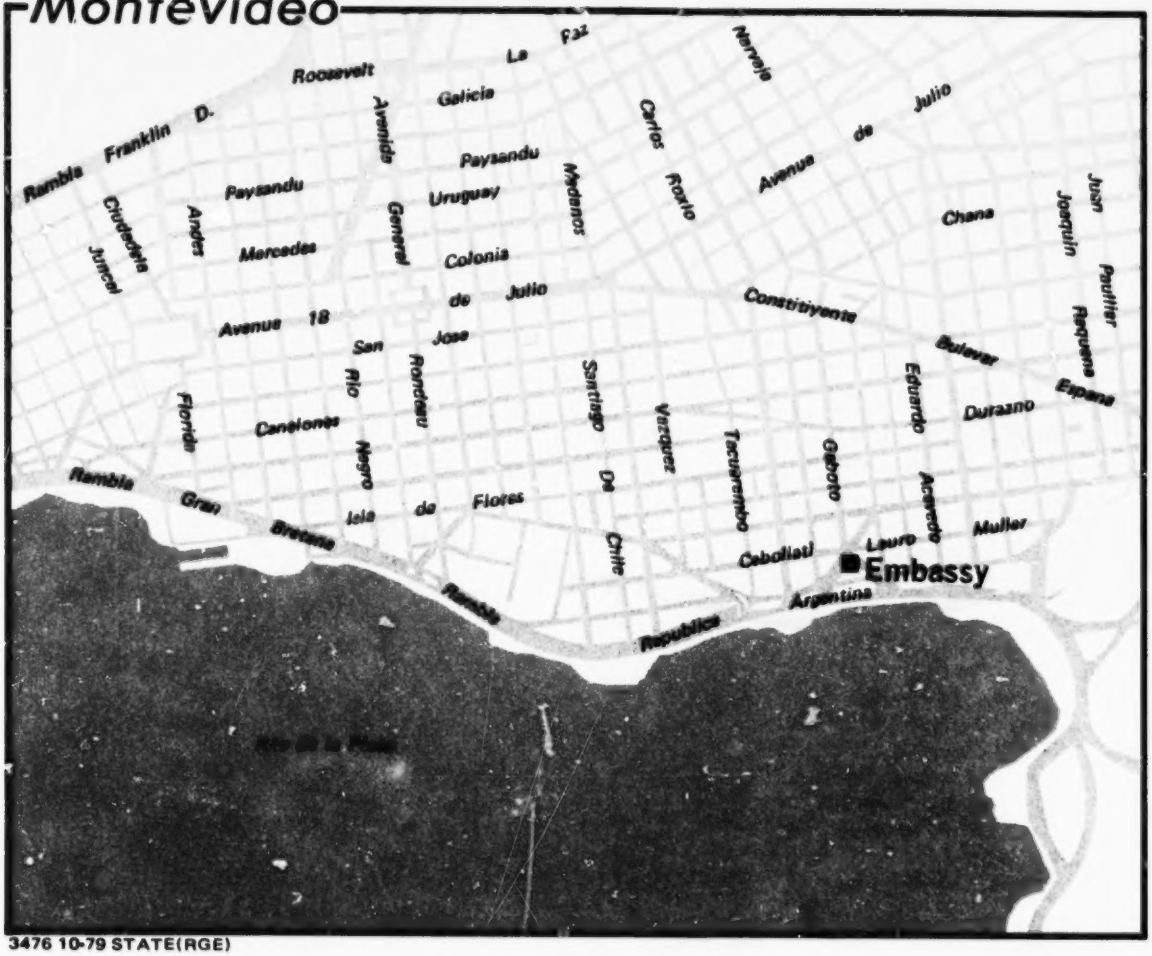
Montevideo



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American Embassy

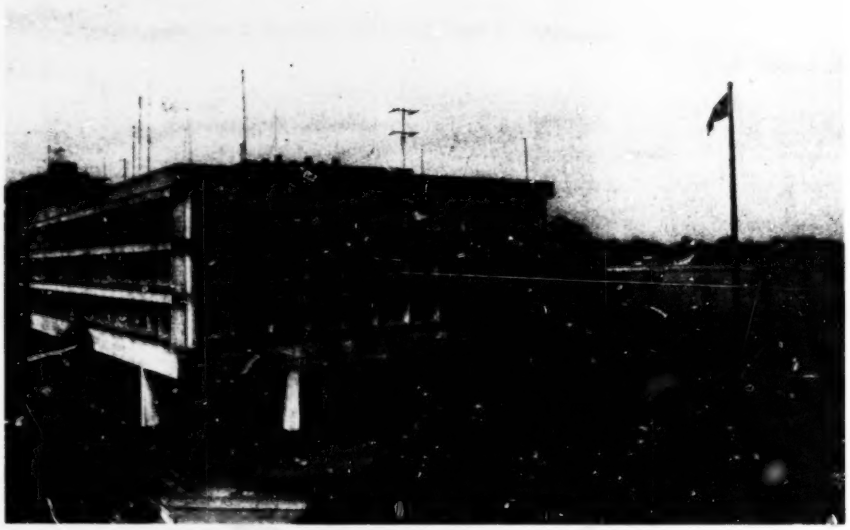
Montevideo

Montevideo is the industrial, commercial, educational, and cultural center of Uruguay as well as the southernmost capital in the hemisphere. It is situated on the northern shore of the estuary formed by the Uruguayan and Parana Rivers, known as Rio de la Plata, just 120 miles east-southeast of Buenos Aires.

Like most Latin American cities, Montevideo has an older section, the Ciudad Vieja, characterized by narrow streets and old buildings. Just a few blocks into the section stands the city's oldest church (Basilica Metropolitana), the first Cabildo (city hall), and remnants of the Ciudadela (the original walled settlement). Across the harbor from the old city rises a 435-foot hill, El Cerro, with an old fortress at its peak commanding a view of the greater part of Montevideo. It is believed the city was named after the hill—Monte Video—I see a hill.

Much of the capital's commerce and banking continues to center in the old city, but other areas are developing steadily. A popular arrangement in the newer section is the "galeria," which houses many small shops under one roof and often connects two streets in midblock. Many wide, tree-lined avenues along with numerous plazas and monuments give the city a park-like atmosphere. Among the more attractive areas to the east are the residential suburbs of Pocitos, Punta Gorda, and Carrasco. The richness of architectural diversity, terra cotta roofs and ironwork balconies, and lovely beaches make Montevideo's suburbs appealing.

For its time, Montevideo was probably the pearl of Latin American cities, well planned and designed to take advantage of a beautiful river. The city took pride in its beautiful architecture, boulevards, and boardwalk. However, the architectural tradition has not been maintained and high rise buildings have popped up like mushrooms. The city has a mixed look, bleaker now, and a walk through some older sections is a walk in the past.



Ezabassy Montevideo, designed by I. M. Pei blends American and Uruguayan architecture.

The Post and Its Administration

The US Mission in Montevideo is composed of the Political, Economic, Administrative, and Consular Sections of the Department of State; United States Information Service (USIS); Department of Commerce; Office of Defense Cooperation (ODC); Defense Attache Office (DAO); and Department of Agriculture.

Each element is responsible to the Ambassador, assisted by the DCM, who establishes policies, objectives, and priorities. The Mission strives to challenge each new assignee and to provide opportunities for personal growth. Therefore, work is assigned to stimulate the output of individuals, which in turn, invigorates the operation of each section.

Separated from the Rio de la Plata by a seawall and the shore-hugging boulevard called Rambla, the Chancery was formally dedicated on December 3, 1969. Designed by the renowned architect I.M. Pei, the building contains 8,000 square meters of space on 5 floors. Its design blends American architectural concepts with Uruguayan motifs, and its atrium vaults from the entrance lobby to the roof of the building, which has skylights. Visible concrete not only reveals the basic form of the structure but also follows natural cement usage on many other buildings in Uruguay. The Binational Center, the Government House (Office of the President of the Republic), Office of the Uruguayan Joint Chiefs of Staff, and most government ministries are located about 10 minutes by car from the Chancery.

Almost all administrative/logistic support for the US Government agencies at post is provided by the Foreign Affairs Administrative Support Section (FAAS). Direct-hire employees number about 52 Americans and 82 Uruguayans. All agencies are located in the Chancery.

Winter office hours (March–December) are 8:45 am to 5:30 pm with 45 minutes for lunch. Summer hours are 8 am to 4:30 pm, with 30 minutes for lunch.

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Ambassador's residence.

An Embassy newsletter, the "Tero Tero Talk," is published once a week. (The Tero Tero is the very vocal national bird of Uruguay.) The publication contains varied information, i.e., scheduled Embassy activities, availability of servants, local cultural events, etc.

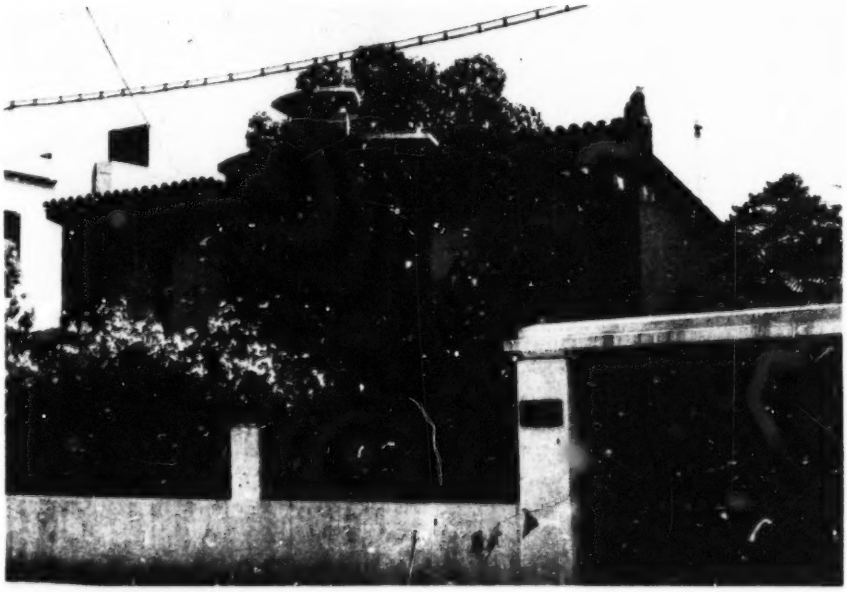
Housing

Temporary Quarters

Montevideo has several moderately priced hotels, but none in the deluxe class. While these hotels are adequate, they do not provide many conveniences found in US chain hotels such as televisions, small refrigerators, or swimming pools; few have coffee shops, and rooms, both single or double, are small and usually in need of repair or modernization. Some hotels popular with tourists and transient personnel are the Victoria Plaza, Parque Hotel, Columbia Palace, and Presidente.

The Embassy owns four apartments and leases another in a building adjacent to the Chancery for use by newly arrived and departing Embassy personnel. If space is available, temporary duty personnel are housed there. It is difficult to accommodate transient personnel in these apartments due to the number of personnel searching for permanent housing (which can take up to 3–4 months) or preparing to depart.

These five apartments each have a living room, kitchen, small servants room, two or three bedrooms, and two baths; two apartments have ocean-front balconies. Complete furnishings, including washers and dryers, are provided. Personnel with infants should bring a crib in their airfreight.



Employees often find housing such as this in the suburb of Carrasco.

Families are given priority in the assignment of apartments. Pets are not permitted in the transient apartments (a building rule). Therefore, if possible, pets should be shipped after permanent housing has been found. If this is not possible, k nnels are available and some Embassy personnel may volunteer to keep pets on a short-term basis. Please inform the post well in advance if arrangements need to be made for your animal(s).

Permanent Housing

The Ambassador's two-story residence is located in a pleasant neighborhood about a 10-minute drive from the Chancery. A large reception hall, library, living room, music room, dining room, and two restrooms are on the first floor. Six bedrooms, five baths, and a kitchenette are upstairs. The upper hall has been arranged and

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comfortably seat 50 people. A swimming pool and a paddle tennis court are located on the spacious grounds. The kitchen, pantry, servants quarters, and recreation room are in the basement.

The residence is fully furnished, including a baby grand piano and a combination radio-phono-tape recorder. The house has ample space for personal decorative items. Bed and bath linens are furnished for representational use only.

The DCM's house is US Government owned and located in the attractive residential suburb of Carrasco, a 20-minute drive from the Chancery. This two-story house is surrounded by a spacious garden complete with a brick barbecue and is near the beach. The ground floor consists of an entrance area, living room, study, dining room, one restroom, a double kitchen, barbecue, and servants quarters. Three bedrooms and three bathrooms are on the second floor. The house is fully furnished and equipped with ranges, refrigerators, freezers, washer, dryer, vacuum cleaner, various small kitchen appliances, and cooking ware. Official Embassy china, glassware, silverware, and table linen are furnished. Garden furniture is also provided.

The house leased for the USIS public affairs officer is also located in Carrasco. It is a two-story structure with an entrance hall, living room, dining room, four bedrooms, three bathrooms, game room, and study. The house has a front and side yard, garage, and small swimming pool in the garden. The PAO's home is fully furnished except for the usual personal household items such as linens, pictures, etc. Furnishings include gas range, refrigerator, freezer, washer, dryer, and sufficient glassware, silverware, and china for representational entertaining.

US Government-leased quarters are provided to some senior officers with representational responsibilities including the chiefs of the Political, Economic, Consular, and FAAS Sections, and the chief of the Office of Defense Cooperation. Other American staff members contract private leases under the living quarters allowance system. The General Services Office assists newcomers in locating housing.

USIS has converted its housing to government leases following an inspection recommendation. The Department of State is in the process of converting to government-leased housing.

Apartments vary from modern to the more traditional architecture.

The names of real estate agents are provided to employees to assist them in finding available housing. Negotiating rents for houses and apartments is common. Although apartments and houses are available, it may take several months to find a home that satisfies individual tastes. The quarters allowance is generally adequate to cover the cost of most private leases. However, newly arrived personnel may find the rising cost of rentals and utilities makes it difficult to locate private leases within the current quarters allowance. The Embassy has a Housing Board which insures equity in the administration of its housing policy.

Apartments and houses vary with the neighborhood in terms of their architectural styles; some buildings have modern architecture, while others follow more traditional lines. Some neighborhoods have a few undesirable characteristics (e.g., power shortages, mosquitoes, mildew, and traffic). All personnel live in housing that is within a 5- to 20-minute drive from the Chancery.

The most desirable apartments have central heating and some have fireplaces. Apartments are very livable and well planned in terms of space usage. Closets in newer buildings are adequate but usually not as spacious as in US apartments. An indoor parking space for one car is usually provided for each apartment unit. Most houses have a garage or off-street parking.

Mildew is a severe problem in Montevideo. Although clothes, drapes, and rugs are the items most frequently affected by mildew, it is rare not to find structural walls seeping water. Peeling paint is the usual indicator of excessive moisture in houses.

Central heating in apartment buildings is usually governed by a condominium of owners seeking to keep expenses down. Heat is supplied to residents several hours a day (usually late afternoon and evening) on a schedule that will be unfamiliar to most Americans. The heating season usually starts late and ends early. Houses are not insulated. Heating bills are much higher than apartments of equal size due to their exposure to the elements, especially prevailing Antarctic winter winds.

Furnishings

The Defense Attache's Office only furnishes its personnel with basic appliances which include refrigerator, washer, dryer, range, and freezer.

The Ambassador, DCM, PAO, and all State personnel are provided with government-owned furnishings and appliances. USIS has a limited amount of furnishings and appliances but can supply basic appliances such as freezer, refrigerator, washer, dryer, and range.

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Downtown Montevideo has modern apartments and skyscrapers.

Furniture sets available to all State employees include a sofa, tables, armchairs, lamps, and carpets for the living room; a dining table with six or eight chairs, buffet, china cabinet, and carpets for the dining room; and queen-size or twin beds with bedspreads, dresser and mirror, chest of drawers, night tables and lamps, chair, desk and chair, and throw rugs for bedrooms. Bring sheets and several blankets in your airfreight in case permanent quarters are found before your household effects arrive.

Appliances and other furnishings also available to State employees include refrigerator, upright freezer, gas range, automatic washer, bottled gas dryer, bridge table with 4 chairs, dinette table with chairs, stepladder, ironing board, clothes hamper, and 3 stepdown transformers (750, 1,000, and 1,500 watts). An allowance of $450 per employee for the purchase of draperies is reimbursed by the US Government. Curtains made or bought here are very expensive; you may wish to bring catalogs which offer custom-made draperies for ordering through the mail. Also bring a vacuum cleaner.

Many new homes and apartments lack light fixtures and the lessee must install them. American-made lamps will work with 220v bulbs and plug adapters which can be bought locally. Bring kitchenware and small appliances from the US; irons, blenders, toasters, etc., are very expensive.

Some quality furniture is sold here, but it is usually custom built and expensive because most wood is imported. Embassy personnel have had good luck purchasing used and antique furniture in the local auction houses "remates," even though the prices are rising. (You may wish to bring books on antique furniture to help you in identifying bargains.) Attractive and reasonably priced wicker furniture is sold. Leather furniture is available at a broad range of prices. Attractive sheepskin, cowhide, or woven woolen of styles, sizes, and colors.

For summer, bring lawn or balcony furniture, beach umbrellas and chairs, and a cooler or ice chest. Reusable freezer blocks are also useful and are expensive here.

Utilities and Equipment

Montevideo has the usual public utilities found in large cities. However, the municipal-manufactured, piped-gas system does not extend to newer residential areas where bottled gas is used. Electrical current is 220v, 50 cycles, single phase throughout Uruguay.

Voltage fluctuations often occur during peak periods. Power failures are frequent due to old equipment, a lack of reserve generating capacity, and delayed construction of new lines to serve fast growing suburbs. Battery-operated radios and clocks, several flashlights, candles, and a camping lantern may be useful.

The telephone system functions inadequately, but nearly all homes and apartments rented to foreigners are equipped with a telephone. Calls made to the US often take several hours to place. Make sure the home or apartment you select has a phone; it takes several months to have a new one installed. Local telephone service is intermittent, and making a connection can be frustrating.

American-made, 110v, 60-cycle appliances, except for clock radios or timers, can be used with stepdown transformers which can be bought here at higher than US prices, from US dealers, or from departing personnel. Depending on the number of 110v appliances you bring to Montevideo, you will need at least 3 stepdown transformers (1,500, 1,000, and 750 watts). All State personnel are supplied with these transformers. Other agency personnel should check the list of household furnishings they are to receive from their agency. Within the Chancery, the electric current is 110v, 50 cycles, single phase.

American black-and-white TV sets will work here with a transformer. Convert 60-cycle record players, tape recorders, and other items to 50 cycles. It is probably more practical to have this done in the US, but conversion to 50 cycles can be done locally.

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Air-conditioners are not considered necessary except during hot, humid periods in January and February. A mild breeze normally freshens houses and apartments during the summer. Large fans are useful; good 220v fans are available locally. As live-in servants become increasingly difficult to find, a dishwasher can be very useful although low water pressure and high energy consumption make this a dubious investment.

Most apartments have central hot water heating fired by fuel oil burners; but in newer apartments, the heating is built into the floors. Houses usually have central hot water heating, using radiators fired by fuel oil. Apartment dwellers may find their building is not kept as warm as they would like because of the very high cost of fuel oil (currently $16.82 per gallon). Many purchase electric or kerosene space heaters. Homeowners may wish to do the same to save the expense of turning on the entire system, or to supplement it.

The water supply is adequate, but water pressure may not always be as high as in most American cities. In some apartment buildings hot water is centrally supplied, but individual electric or gas hot water heaters are more common. Hot water hookups for washers or dishwashers are not always available.

Food

Good quality fresh fruits and vegetables are available in Montevideo throughout the year, but many are only available in their season. Some canned foods are good, but the quality varies and they can be expensive.

Beef, the staple of the Uruguayan diet, is of good quality and relatively inexpensive. Pork and poultry are more expensive than in the US. Veal is difficult to find, and lamb (really, mutton) is only available at certain times of the year (August–January). First-rate dairy products, including excellent cheeses, sour cream, and yogurt, are available in stores and for home delivery at low prices. Ice cream is fair but expensive, about twice the US cost. Local coldcuts are tasty and of good quality. Fresh-baked bread can be purchased daily and is excellent. A wide variety of pastries and cookies also is available; some items are priced well below US levels, while others are rather expensive. A good selection of fish from Rio de la Plata is usually sold at very reasonable prices along the riverfront and in local outdoor markets. Shellfish is expensive and available occasionally. Despite Montevideo's coastal location, seafood has never been an important factor in the local diet.

American women usually buy their produce at "ferias" (outdoor markets) that are set up daily in different parts of the city and dismantled in early afternoon. Most neighborhoods are served by a feria at least twice a week. Also, many permanent vegetable and fruit stands are available, some of which sell select produce and hard-to-find items.

Uruguayan supermarkets are smaller and have fewer items than in the US, but they usually stock a full variety of local staple items. Some supermarkets and many smaller stores stock imported foods, but these are usually of high quality and very expensive.

Montevideo's typical restaurant is the "parrillada." (A parrillada has a huge grill where steaks, ribs, chicken, pork, sausages, kidneys, brains, and chitterlings are slowly barbecued over a wood fire.) The food is very good and prices are reasonable. Salad is served with steak, but other vegetables are rarely served. Restaurant and menu variety is limited, but restaurants offering Italian, German, Chinese, French, and Swiss specialties are available. Also, a few seafood restaurants are located in Punta del Este and other coastal towns. Restaurant prices may seem high for Uruguay, but meals are reasonably priced by US standards.

Few restaurants open before 8 pm. Because of the late dinner hour, tea is fashionable in Uruguay. Several tea shops offer a variety of sandwiches and pastries. Also, many bars, which are snackshops and sidewalk cafes are open throughout the day and into the night. These provide pizza, "chivitos" (a delicious steak sandwich), and other foods from snacks to full meals. The atmosphere is informal.

A cafeteria located in the Embassy serves breakfast, lunch, and snacks. It is operated by a concessionaire. Prices are reasonable and approved by a committee representing both American and Uruguayan personnel.

A cooperative (commissary) is located in the Chancery basement. It meets many of the community's needs, but variety is limited and some stock depletions occur due to shipping and customs clearance delays. Bring a good supply of essential items with you. Most commissary prices are considerably higher than in the US due to high shipping costs; liquor and cigarettes are less expensive.

Co-op members can order caselots of items not regularly stocked. Membership is open to all US employees. Family memberships cost $150 and single memberships cost $75; these sums may be paid over a 3-month period and are refunded on departure from post. Official visitors are granted temporary commissary privileges.

Clothing

Clothing needed in Uruguay is very similar to clothing worn during equivalent US seasons. Although the temperature seldom drops below freezing and it never snows, warm clothing is essential in winter. Raincoats—preferably with removable winter linings—are a must for each family member.

Women. Fashions for women in Montevideo are also similar to those worn in the US and Western Europe, although Uruguayans are more conservative than Americans in the use of color. Except at the height of summer, the light, bright California colors so frequently used year round in American pantsuits and dresses tend to make the visitor or foreign resident stand out from the crowd. Currently, short or cocktail length dresses are being worn for dinners, parties, and receptions. A few long dresses are beginning to be seen again and certainly for black tie affairs. Suits, jackets with skirts and dressy blouses, or dresses are worn at luncheons or teas. The use of pants is pretty much limited to all-American social occasions, "asados" (barbecues), or entertaining at home. Sportswear, especially denim, is popular for everyday wear. Casual outfits are needed for asados. No restrictions on the use of pants or shorts exist. Hats are rarely worn.

Warm clothes are needed in winter. If possible, include some wool

garments since synthetic fibers give less protection against the penetrating damp cold of Montevideo (outdoors and inside). As Montevideo's social life is much more active in fall, winter, and spring (March–November) than in summer, you will need a number of dressy, but warm outfits. Since summer days can be humid and air-conditioning is rare, cotton and cotton/polyester fabrics are more suitable than 100% polyester or nylon fabrics.

Quite a variety of readymade women's clothing is available locally; prices are higher than in the US and products are inferior in workmanship. Knitwear meets international standards and at least one export line is available locally. A few factories are available where wool and leather items can be purchased quite reasonably. Prices on wool and orlon sweaters in all styles, and on boucle knit (textured yarn) suits and evening blouses, are reasonable. Quality hosiery and undergarments are expensive; selection is poor. International brands of nightwear and swimwear are manufactured in Uruguay under license at prices and quality similar to the US. Women's shoes are fashionable, well made, available in average sizes, and reasonably priced; however, the lasts used do not suit narrow or hard-to-fit feet. Leather handbags are available in a multitude of styles and colors at below US prices.

Leather, suede, otter, fox, and sealskin coats are available in many styles at prices that make them popular with visitors and foreign residents. Moreover, it costs little more to have a designed custom-made coat than to buy one off the rack. Good jewelry, especially amethyst and topaz, is available at reasonable prices. A good selection of apparel fabrics is available. The best quality are wool or wool/acrylic flannels, wool or wool/polyester worsteds, and cotton jerseys. Double knits are seldom found. Nice dress material is available. Many American women hire seamstresses who do satisfactory work at reasonable prices, working from photos or your own designs. Patterns are not sold or used here. Bring a large supply of thread and lining and/or interfacing materials; local products are of very poor quality. Hemfacing tape and iron-on mending tape are also very useful. A sewing machine is a great asset, since the seamstress can then work in your home.

Men. Local tastes in men's wear are similar to those in the US and Western Europe. Office and commercial workers wear suits and ties year round. For informal occasions, Uruguayans follow the latest fashions in men's sportswear. Occasionally, embroidered tropical shirts (available in Paraguay, the Philippines, etc.) are seen at summer parties. Topcoats, heavy sweaters, scarves, and hats are worn in winter. Most foreign residents limit their purchases of local menswear to high-quality fabrics (which they have made into custom-tailored suits at reasonable prices), wool sweaters, and leather jackets. Excellent fabrics are available from Hong Kong and British exporters who regularly visit the Embassy.

Although quality varies considerably, shoes are available in most sizes at lower than US prices. Those with narrow feet will have difficulty finding shoes. Uruguay's export lines are not available on the local market.

If you own formal attire, bring it to post since you may need it occasionally. Black tie is worn very rarely by senior officers at diplomatic and other social functions.

Children. Readymade clothes are most attractive but, with the exception of knitwear, expensive and not easy to clean. Parents with growing children should bring a good supply of clothes to post or plan to order as needed from mail-order catalogs through the APO. However, remember that American catalogs are published out of phase with Uruguayan seasons (i.e., summer fashions are offered in American catalogs during the Uruguayan winter). Mothers of little girls should note that Uruguayan girls dress up more often, and their clothes follow adult fashion trends more closely than do girls clothes in the US. The lengths are also slightly longer.

All Uruguayan school children wear uniforms which must be purchased locally. The Uruguayan-American School requires uniforms only through grade 5; these may either be purchased locally or made from your own materials in whatever style you prefer. Girls are expected to wear gray jumpers or skirts with white blouses, and boys gray trousers with white shirts. Girls may wear gray slacks in cold weather. Navy blue sweaters, either cardigan or pullover, are part of the school uniform. Navy blue socks and dark shoes are worn, except for sneakers on gym days. Some problems have been encountered with finding practical and durable gray trousers for boys; buy these prior to coming to Montevideo. US suppliers of private school uniforms often have them in stock. Gray corduroy or jeans are acceptable at this writing.

Warm, practical, and stylish jackets and coats for school children are available at higher than US prices. If possible, buy such essential items before arrival. Children's shoes, including tennis shoes, are attractive and reasonably priced, but not durable. Corrective shoes may be satisfactorily custom made here. Shoestrings are of particularly poor quality; purchase a supply in the US. Over-the-shoes rain boots are also best purchased in the US. A sleeping bag is almost a social necessity for American school children, due to the popularity of overnight visits and slumber parties.

Infant wear in local stores is almost entirely wool or orlon knit; a few terry-cloth suits are available. Undershirts, polo shirts, and overalls are found, but prices are high and styles are not practical. Purchase one-piece snow suits or carriage suits before arrival, or order as needed from catalogs. Infant shoes are readily available.

Military Officers. Civilian clothing is usually worn during duty hours and to most social functions. Uniforms are worn for official visits to military and/or government agencies and to some official and social functions.

Supplies and Services

Supplies

Prescription drugs are expensive. If necessary, prescriptions for special medicines from an American doctor can be filled in the US through APO. Bring a supply of special prescription medicines with you.

Bring cosmetics from the US or order them through APO. Hardware and household articles, etc., are available, but not of the same quality as US products. Bring a supply of nails and picture hooks that can be used in plaster and cement. Paper products such as cocktail napkins, toilet paper, tissues, sanitary products, and paper towels are sold locally, but are of poor

quality and are expensive. Most paper products are also available in the commissary.

Due to the high cost, safety factor, and suitability of layettes purchased locally, families with infants or toddlers are advised to bring items to post. A 3-month supply of baby food, formula, and diapers is essential. Disposable diapers are available locally, but are of poorer quality than most US brands and are expensive. The commissary stocks these most of the time.

Cameras cost two to three times US prices. Black-and-white and color film can be purchased locally at high prices. The commissary does not stock film.

Bring stationery, greeting cards, wrapping paper, and ribbon with you, as such products, occasionally carried by the commissary during holidays, are scarce and expensive. Dripless dinner candles are also useful.

The General Services Office keeps on file a selection of the latest catalogs from the Armed Forces exchange and major US mail-order houses. Personnel can obtain incidental items, clothes, and toys at reasonable prices through APO.

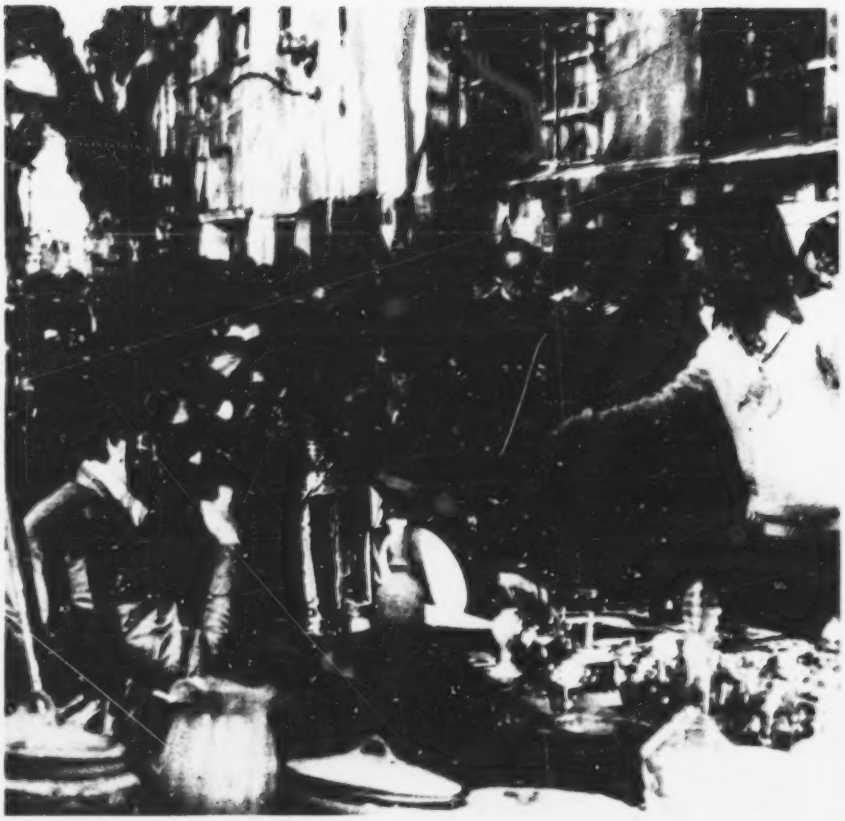
Children's toys are very expensive in Uruguay. Bring toys for your children and birthday party gifts. Also bring lunchboxes and bookbags for elementary school children.

Basic Services

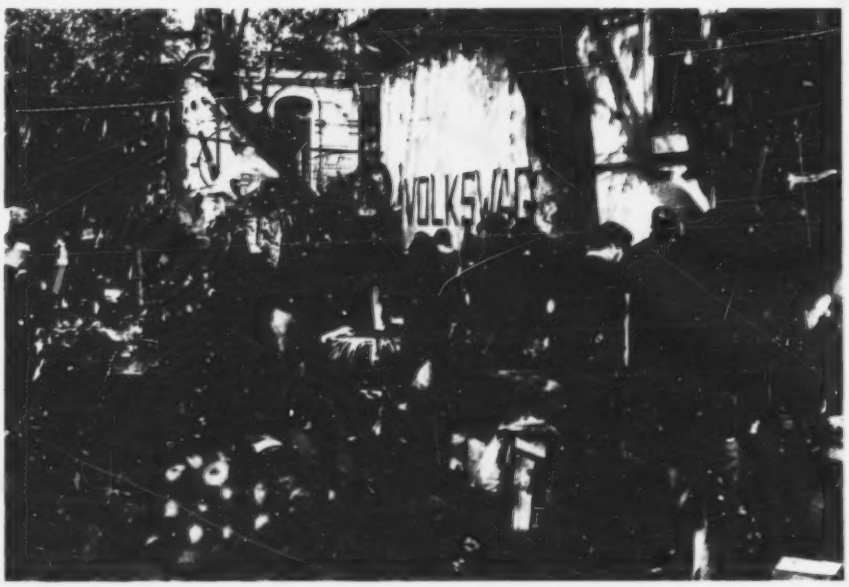
Most household appliances can be repaired locally but not always quickly or cheaply, especially if new parts are needed. Often local Embassy personnel are available after normal working hours to make such repairs. TV service is good but expensive. Watch repair is of good quality. Shoe repairs are done quickly and cheaply. Auto maintenance is adequate and reasonable; but, spare parts are expensive and sometimes difficult to obtain. Body work is done well at reasonable prices.

Both beauty shops and barbershops are good in quality, and prices range from reasonable to expensive. The Embassy has a men's barbershop. Adequate drycleaning is available, but it is very expensive and is not recommended for delicate fabrics. Furs should be cleaned in the US.

Diaper services are nonexistent. Laundry is normally done at home. Iron-on mending tape is useful to repair clothes; this item is not available here.



Antique markets and open-air food markets abound in Montevideo.



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Domestic Help

It is much easier to find daily or part-time, rather than live-in, domestic help. Most families with small children eventually locate a live-in servant. Other families and single people hire a daily housekeeper, part-time cleaning woman, or housekeeper/cook. It is fairly easy to find someone to prepare party food, and good waiters are reasonable, but prices are rising.

Employer obligations regarding time off, vacation, yearend bonus, severance pay, social benefits, etc., are described in the Welcome Kit provided to new arrivals. These benefits, tied to regularly rising salaries, have sharply increased costs for domestic help.

Religious Activities

Church and state are strictly separated in Uruguay. Roman Catholicism is the predominant faith. One Catholic church has Sunday services in English, as does Christ Church—an ecumenical international congregation—and the Anglican and Christian Science churches. Christ Church also has a Sunday school. Many other Christian faiths (Lutheran, Church of God, Baptist, Eastern Orthodox, Seventh-day Adventist, and Mormon) are represented, holding services in Spanish. Montevideo also has several synagogues (all Orthodox). Additional information on the religious services is in the Welcome Kit.

Education

Dependent Education

At Post. Uruguay has free public education from kindergarten through university. Many private and parochial schools also exist. Instruction is in Spanish, and those private schools that do not teach in Spanish must offer it as a second language. The local school year runs from March to mid-December, with a midterm vacation in July and a spring vacation in September or October. Montevideo's public schools, some of which offer good education and excellent facilities, are generally overcrowded and work on 2 or 3 shifts, 5 or 6 days a week. Almost all children of US personnel attend the State Department-supported

Uruguayan-American School.

Uruguayan-American School in Carrasco. The private British and St. Andrew's Schools and a Christian school also offer instruction in English.

Matriculation fees, tuition costs, and local transportation for all schools in Montevideo are covered by the education allowance.

The Uruguayan-American School, founded in 1958, moved to its new location in the Carrasco suburb in February 1978. It fulfills the requirements of a modern American school abroad. Sufficient classroom space is available in three separate buildings (elementary, middle school, and high school) located on a spacious campus. The school offers food service (optional), and bus transportation can be arranged.

The Uruguayan-American School provides classes, in English, from nursery school through grade 12, using American or bilingual instructors, textbooks, and teaching techniques. Classes are coeducational. The school is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in Atlanta, Georgia. (The most recent evaluation was in October 1978.) The school capitalizes on its overseas location to provide instruction in Spanish as well as other regional studies for US and international students.

The student body number about 200, of whom 60% are American, 20% Uruguayan, and the remainder from various nationalities. Classes in art, music, and physical education are offered. The school has a large, but dated library (8,000 volumes) and offers complete counseling services. It is the official testing center in Uruguay for the Scholastic Aptitude Test and the American College Test. The school's first semester runs from early August through November, followed by a 3-month summer vacation. The second semester starts early in March and ends in early July.

The British School is coeducational for kindergarten through grade 12. Located in a large attractive complex in the Carrasco area, this school has a few American, some British, and many Uruguayan students. It follows the British system of education, but American history and government are also taught. American children accustomed to the American system of testing (examinations covering only those subjects studied during one semester) may have some difficulty adjusting to the British system (testing all previously studied subjects periodically). Some children have especially had difficulty in adjusting to the different way of teaching mathematics.

St. Andrew's School is coeducational and has students from kindergarten through grade 8. The school is located in the Pocitos suburb and has adequate play facilities. It is also organized on the British system. These schools have first semester from March to June and second semester from late July to early December.

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Special Educational Opportunities

The University of the Republic, located in Montevideo, is the country's only university. Instruction is free and facilities are open to all foreign residents. However, courses taken are seldom accepted for credit at US colleges and universities.

The Embassy maintains an active Spanish-language training program for employees and adult dependents. Everyone is encouraged to learn the language. Classes at different levels of proficiency are normally in progress.

Post Orientation Program

Prior to your arrival, an employee is assigned to serve as your sponsor. The sponsor will meet you on arrival and help you and your family with shopping, school selection and registration, and other problems which may arise during your first weeks at post. You will also receive a Welcome Kit to answer many of your questions about life in Montevideo. The kit contains a map; information about Uruguay, recommended restaurants, the Embassy, and local services and stores; a compilation of useful phrases with their River Plate Spanish equivalents; and many other useful items.

Embassy officers also conduct orientation briefings and lectures for new employees and dependents.

Recreation and Social Life

Sports

Uruguay's national pastime is soccer, locally called football. Uruguayan teams enjoy fanatical support, especially the rivalry between the two best clubs, Nacional and Penarol. Montevideo's Centenario Stadium holds about 70,000 people and games are frequent. Spectators are well behaved; tickets are reasonably priced.

Swimming is popular and enjoyed 4–5 months every year. Uruguay's beaches extend from Montevideo to the Brazilian border. River beaches a few minutes outside Montevideo are much cleaner and less crowded than those nearer the city. Real ocean bathing and surfing is possible only at or beyond Punta del Este (85 miles from Montevideo). Prices at Punta del Este and other coastal resorts have risen sharply, and a vacation stay is expensive. However, day trips to the beach are popular. Also, several private clubs with swimming pools are available in Montevideo.

Plaza "El Entrevero" at 18 de Julio.

Tennis is popular and some municipal courts are available. Several private clubs offer memberships with steadily rising entrance fees and monthly dues. One of the better ones is the Carrasco Lawn Tennis Club (entrance fee is $500), which has 18 well-kept courts, a good restaurant, and a swimming pool. Another is the Montevideo Cricket Club, which has four tennis courts, a good restaurant, and a swimming pool where children may take lessons.

Golfers will find two challenging 18-hole courses in Montevideo. The Golf Club of Uruguay has a beautiful course at Punta Carreta, less than 1 mile from the Embassy, in the residential area bordering the Rio de la Plata. The club's facilities include a large dining room, snackbar, swimming pool, and tennis and handball courts. Current membership rates at the Golf Club are about $1,500 for the entrance fee, $18 dues per month, and $10 greens fee for nonmembers. An optional plan is available to diplomats charging only a monthly fee of $30 plus.

The Cerro Golf Club is situated across the bay from the downtown area, about 40 minutes by car. It is less

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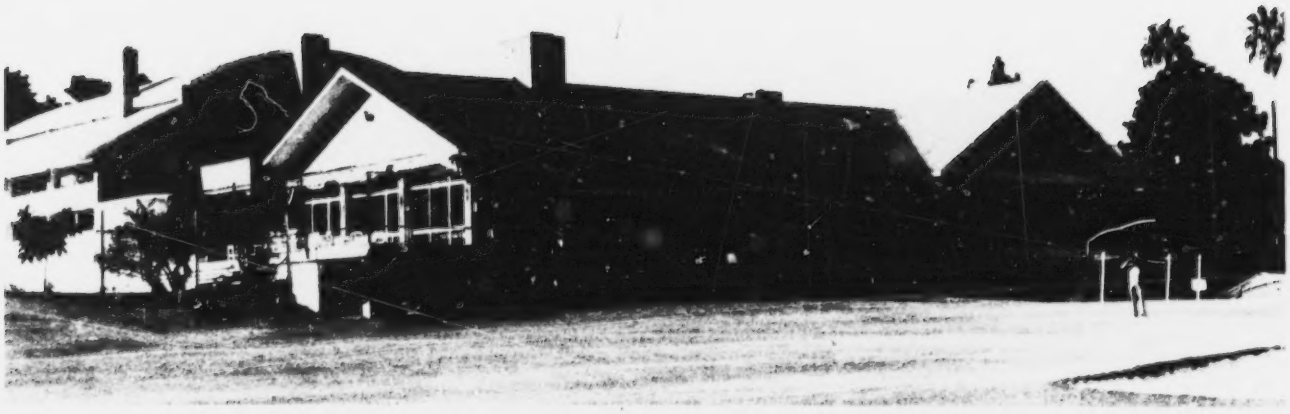

Montevideo's Golf Club offers a clubhouse for dining and swimming as well as golf and tennis.

crowded than Punta Carreta, although neither is crowded in the US sense. The Cerro Golf Club offers light luncheons and its bar/gameroom is open Wednesday afternoons, weekends, and national holidays. Current membership rates are about $60 for the entrance fee, $10 dues per month, and $6 greens fee for nonmembers. Two 18-hole courses in Punta del Este are used mostly during the summer tourist season.

Riding is also popular. The Club Hipico and the Polo Club (which also has two tennis courts and a large swimming pool) offer all facilities needed for the care and maintenance of horses. Fees for horse rentals, including jumpers, are reasonable compared to those in the US.

Horseracing is a popular diversion, and Montevideo has a good track in the northern part of the city. Bullfighting and cockfighting, popular in many Latin American countries, were outlawed in Uruguay many years ago.

Montevideo has three sailing clubs: Montevideo Yacht Club, Nautilus Yacht Club, and Montevideo Rowing Club. The Montevideo Yacht Club has several Marconi-rigged fin keelboats for members. Water sports other than swimming are just beginning to develop in Montevideo. Water skiing is popular in Punta del Este.

Uruguay offers good freshwater fishing in the interior and surfcasting along the coast. The Rio Negro is famous for its large dorado, an excellent game fish. The best fishing is in Punta del Este where weakfish, drumfish, and bluefish are most often caught. Boat rentals are expensive, particularly during summer. Bring your own tackle for shoreline and freshwater angling.

Good hunting is available within a relatively short drive of the city. Partridge, plover, doves, pigeon, and duck are among the game birds available. A permit and permission from a property owner to hunt on private property is required. Guns and ammunition are available in Montevideo, but at very high prices. The Embassy restricts the import of private firearms. (See Firearms and Ammunition.)

Almost all sporting equipment available in Montevideo is imported and, therefore, expensive. Bring golf and tennis equipment with you or order from US manufacturers through the APO. Bicycles are popular with both children and adults; include them in your household effects. Few bicycles are sold here as they are very expensive. It can be difficult to obtain parts for 10-speed bicycles. Bring warmup suits for the entire family if you plan to participate in athletics.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Montevideo has a number of historic sites which are well worth visiting, including the cabildo (city hall) and Cerro fortress. A planetarium offers scheduled shows of the southern and northern skies.

The city has several parks and plazas, many with play facilities, and a botanical garden. A short drive into the country will take you quickly into rolling cattle and sheep country, land

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of the colorful Uruguayan gaucho. Traffic in the interior is usually light, and a Sunday drive can be relaxing.

Uruguay is unique in South America in that practically any point of the country is within a 1-day drive of the capital. Popular tourist attractions are the famous resort towns of Atlantida, Piriapolis, and Punta del Este. Beyond Punta del Este are many worthwhile—some spectacular—sights on the road to the Brazilian border. Punta del Este's popularity with wealthy Argentines and Brazilians has pushed prices well past an official American's normal budget. Many American personnel go to Punta del Este for a 1-day trip during summer weekends but do not stay overnight.

The old settlement of Colonia, founded by the Portuguese in 1680, lies 100 miles west of Montevideo along the coast. Colonia is 1 hour from Buenos Aires by modern hydrofoil.

In the interior, 78 miles north of Montevideo, is the city of Minas, known for its quarries of high-grade marble and mineral water springs. Its lakes and hills present a change from the seaside. The pleasant interior towns of Salto and Paysandu, located along the Uruguay River, also can be reached in less than a 1-day drive.

On the Brazilian border to the north are the towns of Rivera and Artigas. Located in the area between these cities are geological fields where amethysts and topaz may be found. The Brazilian border and town of Chuy, just 140 miles northeast of Punta del Este, offer a popular weekend drive. Brazilian coffee and other consumer goods are available at advantageous prices (in some cases at one-half the Montevideo price). Also near the border are two restored old forts, Santa Teresa and San Miguel, and the lovely small beach resort of La Coronilla. The local flora and fauna are notable. Comfortable, reasonably priced hotels and several good restaurants are located in the area. Near both forts are charming government-run "paradores" (hotels), which are well worth an overnight stay or even an extended vacation.

Brazil, Argentina, and Chile offer a multitude of tourist attractions. One of the most popular is Iguazu Falls, which all travelers consider a must. You can reach this great unharnessed series of falls on the Brazilian-Paraguayan-Argentine border by automobile, bus, or air.

Jose Artigas monument.

Entertainment

Montevideo has many movie theaters showing recent American and European films. Movies in English have Spanish subtitles. Admission prices are considerably lower than in the US. (In January 1982, the most expensive movie ticket cost about US$2.60.)

Montevideo has 2 casinos offering roulette and baccarat, the Parque Casino (3 blocks from the Embassy), and the more elegant Carrasco Casino. No nightclubs exist; however, some restaurants with floor shows and several lively late hour discotheques are available.

Social Activities

Among Americans. The American Association holds monthly luncheon meetings at a downtown hotel. Membership in this organization enables you to meet and maintain contact with Americans representing business interests and other organizations in Uruguay. The association also sponsors an annual golf tournament and a year end picnic.

The American Women's Club is an active community service and social group composed principally of the spouses of official and business Americans in Montevideo. The club

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holds monthly meetings at its Carrasco clubhouse, except during summer. Among its activities are a thrift shop, which sells used articles to raise funds for charity, and a number of social events.

The Marine Security Guards organize Happy Hours, TGIF's, and various other functions at the Marine House.

International Contacts. A diplomatic association, the "Agrupacion de Funcionarios Diplomaticos, Consulares y de Organismos Internacionales" meets monthly. The 100-member association provides an opportunity for cultural interchange among the foreign missions in Uruguay. In addition to the monthly meetings, the association sponsors various activities for members and their families.

Both the Lions and the Rotarians welcome Americans as guests or members of their numerous Montevideo chapters.

Membership in one of the tennis, golf, or yacht clubs can be another excellent way of meeting Uruguayans and other foreign nationals. Montevideo also has an active YMCA.

Boy Scouting activities are available in Montevideo. Some American boys belong to one of two English-speaking troops. American children usually make friends with Uruguayan children quickly. No Scouting organizations exist for girls or for small boys in Uruguay.

Private entertaining, whether official or not, usually takes the form of luncheons, cocktail parties, coffees, teas, buffet suppers, and small dinner parties. Uruguayans are open to social contacts, and representational activities are frequent. However, soaring costs have had a dramatic effect on the type of functions. Small dinners have now been replaced by receptions or cocktails; restaurant entertaining has become limited.

Official Functions

Nature of Functions

The schedule of representational functions attended by the Ambassador, DCM, and all country team members is relatively heavy, particularly during May–November. Embassy officers at all levels and in all agencies regularly entertain Uruguayan official contacts in connection with their duties. Most entertaining is informal and carried on in homes or restaurants.

Standards of Social Conduct

Social conduct here follows familiar US and European patterns. Refer to the publication *Diplomatic Social Usage* or consult the Embassy's protocol officer to answer any questions.

Officers should bring a supply of at least 100 calling cards. Verify that the diplomatic title assigned to you by the Department is in accordance with post practices. A supply of informals should be printed in the US.

Military officers and their spouses will need an initial supply of 100 official calling cards. Bring 100 "(military title) and Mrs." cards and 100 "(military title) and Mrs." informal folding cards. The style should be the same as in the US with English wording. Publications such as the *Officer's Guide* show the proper format. Attache personnel can refer to DIA directives located in the Defense Detachment for proper wording and titles. ODC personnel should bring calling cards as recommended above. Calling cards are not necessary for enlisted and DAO civilian personnel.

Notes For Travelers

Getting to the Post

Travel to Montevideo is determined by the travel section of the appropriate agency. Notify the Embassy as well as your agency through appropriate channels before your arrival. Also advise the FAAS administrative officer of travel details, or simply send a copy of the letter of notification which you sent to your agency, if this includes travel details. It is also courteous to acknowledge assignment to post in a brief letter to the Ambassador.

Carrasco Airport is about 13 miles from downtown Montevideo. The airport building has a currency exchange booth which is open during business hours only. Oceangoing vessels dock in downtown Montevideo, just a few minutes from the better hotels and the Chancery.

All new arrivals will be met and assisted through necessary customs, health, and immigration procedures when advance notice is received. If you are not met, call the Chancery at 40–90–51, during or after duty hours.

Punta del Este Yacht Port.

Customs, Duties, and Passage

Customs and Duties

In addition to using your unaccompanied baggage allowance, you may want to send some packages by APO. The advantage of using APO is that packages do not go through customs, and are therefore available the day they arrive. Please follow APO weight and size limitations and use the correct APO address. (See Communications—Mail and Pouch.)

Consider customary delays in clearing household effects and in finding permanent housing when packing; use the weight authorized for accompanied and unaccompanied air baggage as much as possible. Bring clothing and other items that will help you set up a temporary home.

Delays in clearing household shipments and cars usually average 2 weeks or more. To keep the time to a minimum, a few rules should be strictly followed. Send the FAAS administrative officer the following information as early as possible:

- full name of all family members who will travel to post and type, number, issue date of passports, and estimated date of arrival;
- type of shipment being made;
- car serial number, engine number, make, model, color, weight, and all accessories including radio, heater, defroster, etc.; and
- a complete inventory of household and personal effects (or bring these inventories with you).

Ship household effects and automobiles at the earliest possible date. Insure household effects for your own protection in the event of damage or theft. Mail all shipping documents and packing lists through APO as soon as possible so that free-entry procedures can be started. Retain a copy for your records. Address crates and vans carrying household effects to:

US Ambassador
US Embassy
Montevideo, Uruguay
(your initials)

According to current Uruguayan law, although implementing regulations have not been issued, all personal household effects imported duty free into Uruguay on or after November 1, 1974, must be exported or sold only to another person with diplomatic privileges.

Military Personnel. All military personnel should ship personal effects and household goods to this station as soon as possible after they receive PCS orders; the processing of these items through local customs may take several weeks. If household goods arrive before the employee, local storage facilities are available and satisfactory. Liftvan packing is recommended to reduce damage and pilferage. Consign shipments to the US Defense Attache, or USODC, American Embassy, Montevideo, Uruguay with outer containers marked as follows:

Office of Defense Attache
or
Office of Defense Cooperation
US Embassy
Montevideo, Uruguay

If Priority Baggage (PRIBAG) is forwarded and desired immediately on arrival, it should be shipped at the earliest possible date via US MILAIR. Usually special consideration is given to the release of PRIBAG, and the waiting period is not as long as for other shipments. Items should be adequately banded to prevent pilferage.

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Passage

Be sure to check with M/MED or a military medical facility regarding required and recommended immunizations. Yellow fever and cholera immunizations are sometimes required if coming from other countries where these diseases exist. Although the yellow fever inoculation is usually unnecessary, it is required to enter other South American countries, and you should be immunized to cover contingency travel. Other advisable immunizations are typhoid and polio. A gamma globulin shot should be taken a few days before departing for Uruguay and kept current while here.

Children should have a smallpox vaccination and an antidiphtheria inoculation. Also, children who are over 1 year of age should receive immunizations against measles, whooping cough, polio, typhoid, and yellow fever. The International Certificate of Vaccinations (the yellow book) is acceptable documentation for all shots.

Brazilian and Argentinian visas are useful for traveling to these countries.

Pets

Pets with a certificate of good health may be imported into Uruguay. Dogs and cats also require a certificate of rabies vaccination. These certificates should be endorsed and authenticated by an Uruguayan consul in the US or other point of departure before shipment. Write the administrative officer for current information if you plan to bring a pet.

Travelers accompanied by pets may experience a delay in Buenos Aires if they change airports to take a connecting flight to Montevideo. Pets leaving the area of the Buenos Aires international airport (Ezeiza) are considered as having entered Argentina and must be examined by an Argentine veterinarian. If a veterinarian is not immediately available, long delays may result. Since US health and rabies certificates are valid in Argentina, travelers with pets should continue on to Montevideo on the same plane or change to a connecting flight that departs only from Ezeiza Airport.

Another consideration is the requirement that no pets are allowed in the cabin of any plane departing from Argentina. Therefore, all pets must be placed in the compartment under the plane that is used for freight and baggage. Since some planes do not have pressurized freight compartments, you may have to spend a number of hours in Ezeiza Airport waiting for a plane with a pressurized luggage compartment.

Travelers with pets may find it more convenient to fly to Montevideo via Brazil rather than Argentina.

Firearms and Ammunition

Imports of firearms and ammunition must be approved by the Foreign and Defense Ministries. Only the following nonautomatic firearms and ammunitions may be brought to Uruguay:

Item	Quantity
Pistols	1
Rifles	1
Shotguns	2
Ammunition for above firearms	1,000 rounds

The above firearms and ammunition may be shipped (but not mailed) to post without an export license provided they are consigned to US personnel for their personal use and not for resale. Prior approval of the Chief of Mission is necessary and is granted according to individual needs.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

In 1975 the basic currency unit in Uruguay was established as the New Uruguayan Peso (NUP or N$). The change was required due to the steady depreciation of the peso, which continues because of the internal inflation rate which has been in the 30% annual range. The current (August 1982) rate of exchange is N$12.9 = US$1.

Uruguay has many banks, some with numerous branches throughout the country. A number of foreign banks, including the Bank of America, First National City Bank of New York, and Bank of Boston, have branches in Montevideo. Travelers checks may be purchased through banking facilities at the Chancery.

Adequate banking facilities exist in Montevideo, and peso checking accounts may be established. However, personal peso checks are seldom used; most employees find a US checking account useful. US checks can be cashed in the Embassy for pesos or dollars.

The metric system of weights and measures is used.

Taxes, Exchange, and Sale of Property

All US Government employees at post have duty-free entry privileges. Embassy policy on the importation and sale of personal property is governed by Department of State policy as set forth in FAMC 378 and later directives.

No sale of personal property may be made without written notification to the administrative officer. No profit may accrue to the employee under any circumstances. All excess proceeds made on the sale of property must be donated to an authorized charity or other approved organization. The allowed total cost of a car includes purchase price, shipping charges (paid by employee), maritime insurance, operating insurance over $150 a year, capital improvement (not repairs), and local registration fees. Invoice and evidence of expenses are required to substantiate costs.

Motor and heating fuel is available on a tax-exempt basis. Payment for gasoline is made by means of prepurchased coupons. Employees may purchase up to 500 liters of gasoline a month under this system. Uruguay has a value-added tax of 8%–18%, depending on the category of goods and services. All purchasers are required to pay this tax.

Recommended Reading

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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Taylor, Philip. *Government and Politics of Uruguay*. Tulane University: New Orleans, 1960.

Vangor, Milton Isadore. *Jose Batlle y Ordonez of Uruguay: The Creator of His Time, 1902–1907*. Harvard University Press: Cambridge, MA, 1963.

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Several excellent texts in Spanish are available through the USIS library or Embassy Personnel Section.

Downtown Montevideo's main street—18 de Julio.

*US GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE:1982-381-942/10